

Application No.: 10/606911

Case No.: 55313US010

Listing of Claims

1. (Withdrawn) A method of making a retroreflective article, comprising the steps of:
providing an elongate strip of a retroreflective sheeting on a release liner, wherein the sheeting has a first major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface protected by the liner;
cutting the elongate strip of retroreflective sheeting into smaller discrete segments on the liner;
stretching the liner in at least one direction to separate segments; and
attaching the first major viewing surface of the sheeting to a second major surface of an elongate strip of a carrier having a first major surface and the second major surface.
2. (Withdrawn) A method of making a retroreflective article, comprising the steps of:
providing an elongate strip of a retroreflective sheeting on a release liner, wherein the sheeting has a first major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface protected by the liner;
cutting the elongate strip of retroreflective sheeting into smaller discrete segments on the liner;
removing selected portions of the sheeting to separate the remaining segments; and
attaching the first major viewing surface of the sheeting to the second major surface of an elongate strip of a carrier having a first major surface and a second major surface.
3. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, and further comprising attaching the first major viewing surface of the selected portions to the second major surface of a second elongate strip of a carrier having a first major surface and a second major surface.
4. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein the segments of retroreflective sheeting are separated by a gap of between 4 mm and 100% of a length of the shortest adjacent sheeting segment.

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5. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein the second major opposing surface of the sheeting comprises an adhesive and the adhesive is protected by a release surface.
6. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, wherein the method further includes the steps of providing an elongate strip of a second retroreflective sheeting, cutting the elongate strip of second retroreflective sheeting into smaller discrete segments, and attaching the discrete segments of retroreflective sheeting to the carrier.
7. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2, and further comprising the steps of:
cutting a non-retroreflective sheeting into smaller discrete segments; and
adhering the non-retroreflective sheeting segments to the liner.
8. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 7, wherein at least some of the non-retroreflective sheeting are fluorescent.
9. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 2 wherein at least some of the retroreflective segments are fluorescent.
10. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 9, wherein the retroreflective sheeting and second retroreflective sheeting are alternated along the carrier.
11. (Withdrawn) A method of making a retroreflective article, comprising the steps of:
unwinding a continuous strip of retroreflective sheeting;
sealing crossweb lines;
cutting through the crossweb lines; and
adhering cut pieces to an elongate release liner, wherein the cut pieces are spaced from one another on the elongate release liner.
12. (Currently Amended) A method of applying a retroreflective article to a flexible substrate, comprising the steps of:

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providing an elongate strip of an article having (i) a carrier with a first major surface and a second major surface and (ii) a plurality of discrete segments of a retroreflective sheeting having a first major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface protected by a release surface, wherein the first major viewing surface of the sheeting is attached to the second major surface of the carrier, and wherein the segments are spaced apart from one another to prevent the contact between one another when the article is bent a predetermined amount;
exposing the second major opposing adhesive surface of the sheeting; and
applying the adhesive surface of the sheeting to the flexible substrate to thereby adhere the sheeting to the substrate.

13. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein exposing the second major surface comprises unrolling a roll containing the plurality of discrete segments.

14. (Original) The method of claim 12, wherein the exposing the second major surface comprises removing a release liner prior to applying the retroreflective article.

15. (Original) The article of claim 12, and further comprising partially tearing the carrier along a plurality of discontinuities during the step of applying the adhesive surface of the sheeting to the flexible substrate.

16. (Original) The method of claim 12, further comprising the additional step of: removing the carrier from the applied article to thereby expose the first major viewing surface of the sheeting.

17. (Original) The method of claim 16, wherein the carrier is extensible and permits the article to be positioned along an irregular surface of a substrate or along a curved path.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of applying a retroreflective article to a flexible substrate, comprising the steps of:

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providing an elongate strip of a conspicuity article having an extensional stiffness, A, a bending rigidity, D, and a neutral axis a distance y_n from a first major surface of the final article, and adapted for attachment to a flexible substrate having an anticipated bend radius (r), the conspicuity article having (i) a carrier with a first major surface and a second major surface and (ii) a plurality of discrete segments of a retroreflective sheeting of length l having a first major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface [including a tackifier and being protected by a release surface], wherein the first major viewing surface of the sheeting is attached to the second major surface of the, and wherein l

is selected based upon calculating $\sqrt{\left(\frac{D}{A}\right)\left(\frac{r}{y_n}\right)}$;

exposing the second major opposing adhesive surface of the sheeting; and
applying the adhesive surface of the sheeting to the flexible substrate.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the adhesive comprises a hot melt adhesive.
20. (Currently Amended) A method of applying a retroreflective article to a substrate, comprising the steps of:
 - providing an elongate strip of a conspicuity article having (i) an extensible carrier with a first major surface and a second major surface and (ii) a plurality of discrete segments of a retroreflective sheeting having a first major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface including a tackifier and being protected by a release surface, wherein the first major viewing surface of the sheeting is attached to the second major surface of the carrier and wherein the segments are spaced apart from one another to prevent the contact between one another when the article is bent a predetermined amount;
 - exposing the second major opposing adhesive surface of the sheeting; and
 - applying the adhesive surface of the sheeting to the substrate while stretching the carrier to direct application of the segments upon the substrate.

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21. (Currently Amended) A method of applying a retroreflective article to a flexible substrate, comprising the steps of:
providing an article having a neutral axis a distance y_n from a first major surface of the final article, and adapted for attachment to a flexible substrate having an anticipated bend radius (r), the article having (i) a carrier with a first major release surface and a second major surface and (ii) a plurality of discrete segments of a retroreflective sheeting of length l
spaced apart from one another by a distance at least $\frac{y_n}{r} \times l$, the segments having a first
major viewing surface and a second major opposing adhesive surface, wherein the first major viewing surface of the sheeting is attached to the second major surface of the carrier and (iii) the article being provided in a roll so that the second major adhesive surface of the sheeting is adjacent the first major release surface of an adjacent layer of the carrier in the roll;
exposing the second major opposing adhesive surface of the sheeting; and
applying the adhesive surface of the sheeting to the flexible substrate to thereby adhere the sheeting to the substrate.
22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein exposing the second major surface comprises unrolling the roll.
23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the additional step of: removing the carrier from the applied article to thereby expose the first major viewing surface of the sheeting.
24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the carrier is extensible and permits the article to be positioned along an irregular surface of a substrate or along a curved path.
25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the second major surface of the carrier comprises an adhesive,

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the first major viewing surface of the sheeting is attached to the second major surface of the carrier with a second adhesion force,
the sheeting provides a first adhesion force when attached to a substrate, and the first adhesion force is greater than the second adhesion force.

26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the sheeting is selected from the group consisting of enclosed lens beaded sheeting, encapsulated beaded sheeting, prismatic sheeting and combinations thereof.